

THE IDENTITY OF LEPTOFÆNUS F. SMITH AND
PELEGINELLA WESTWOOD (HYMENOPTERA).

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In 1862 Frederick Smith¹ described as *Leptofœnus* a peculiar Hymenopterous insect of doubtful affinities which he says unites some of the characters of *Fœnus* (*Gasteruption*), *Megischus* and *Pelecinius*). A recent examination of this paper led me to compare his description with a specimen of the remarkable chalcid-fly *Pelecinnella*, and I find that the two are undoubtedly synonymous. As the *Leptofœnus* (1862) antedates Westwood's *Pelecinnella* (1868), Smith's name must take precedence.

These insects are now generally conceded to form a part of the family Cleonymidæ although they constitute a very aberrant group represented, so far as is known, only in the neotropical region from Brazil to Panamá

SUBFAMILY LEPTOFOENINÆ HANDLIRSCH.

GENUS LEPTOFOENUS SMITH.

Type: *L. peleciniiformis* Smith

- 1862 F. Smith, Trans. Entom. Soc. London (3) vol. 1, p. 43 ♀
(*Leptofœnus*)
- 1868 Westwood, Trans. Entom. Soc. London, Proc., p. XXXVI
(*Pelecinnella*)
- 1874 Westwood, Thesaur. Entom. Oxon., p. 142 Pl. XXVI, fig.
8 (*Pelecinnella*)
- 1889 Schletterer, Berliner Entom. Zeits., vol. 33, p. 239 (*Leptofœnus*)
- 1895 Ashmead, Proc. Entom. Soc. Washington, vol. 3, p. 232
(*Pelecinnella*)
- 1902 Dalla Torre, Catalogus Hymenopterorum, vol. 3, p. 1075
(*Pelecinnella*).
- 1903 Szépligeti, Ann. Mus. Nat. Hungarici, vol. 1, p. 365
(*Leptofœnus*).

¹Trans. Entom. Soc. London, (3), vol. 1.

- 1924] *Identity of Leptofœnus F. Smith and Pelecinella West.* 303
- 1904 Ashmead, Mem. Carnegie Mus. Pittsburgh, vol. 1, p. 285, p. 384, p. 486 (*Pelecinella*)
- 1909 Schmiedeknecht. Genera Insectorum, fasc. 97, p. 150 (*Pelecinella*)
- 1910 Kieffer, Evaniidæ, Das Tierreich, Lief. 30, p. 410 (*Leptofœnus*)
- 1912 Viereck, Bull. U. S. Nat. Mus., No. 83, p. 84 (*Leptofœnus*).
- 1915 Brues, Psyche, vol. 22, p. (*Pelecinella*)
- 1923 Gahan & Fagan, Bull. U. S. Nat. Mus., No. 124, p. 112 (*Pelecinella*)
- 1924 Handlirsch, Schröder's Handbuch der Entomologie, vol. 3, p. 744 (*Leptofœnus*); p. 764 (*Pelecinella*)

As already stated Smith ('62) did not locate his genus *Leptofœnus* in any family, and as his remarks concerning it preclude its association with the Chalcidoidea, Westwood ('68) placed his *Pelecinella* there without suspecting its identity. Schletterer ('89) quoted Smith's description and speculated concerning the relationships of *Leptofœnus*, but made no attempt to locate it in any family. Ashmead ('95) transferred *Pelecinella* to the family Cleonymidæ, considering it better placed there than in the Torymidæ (Callimonidæ) where Westwood had first ('68) placed it, or in the Perilampidæ where it is located in Westwood's "Thesaurus." Since then no one has seen fit to suggest relationship with any other Chalcidoids. Kieffer ('10) includes *Leptofœnus* in the Evaniidæ where it is placed at the end of the subfamily Aulacinæ. Finally Handlirsch ('24) has erected a new family for *Leptofœnus*, placing it between the Stephanidæ and Megalyridæ, and in the same volume he includes *Pelecinella* as the tribe *Pelecinellini* of the subfamily Cleonyminæ of the Chalcididæ, not suspecting any relationship between the two genera.

The checkered taxonomic career of *Leptofœnus* thus illustrates well the great difficulty which attends the allocation of aberrant insects on the basis of descriptions.

The five described species of *Leptofœnus* are all very closely similar although differing strikingly in color. The type species, *L. peleciniiformis* Smith seems to be most closely similar to *L. ashmeadi* Brues from Brazil, although undoubtedly distinct.

Since this was written I have seen a specimen of *Leptofœnus* from Panama. This is a female found by Prof. W. M. Wheeler on Barro Colorado Island in the Canal Zone, where it was seen in company with several others on the bark of a felled *Cordia* tree. Contrary to expectations, however, this is evidently not Smith's species, but appears to be a variety of *L. westwoodi* Ashmead described originally from Brazil. It differs conspicuously from the latter in color, lacking the rufous markings which are replaced by black, but agrees so well otherwise that I believe it to be only a well marked color variety of that species.